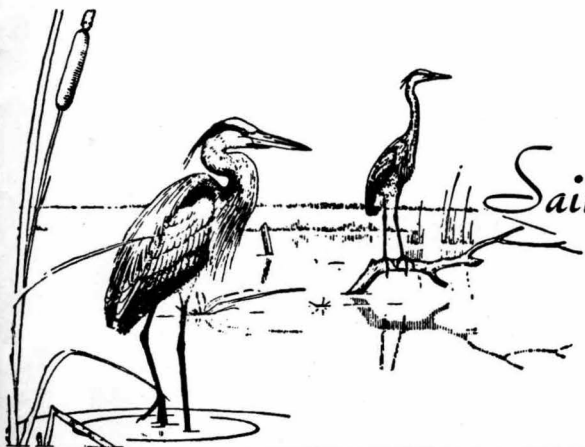




Saint Louis Audubon Bulletin

November, 1961

Vol. 30, No. 1

ONCE AROUND THE SUN

Third Baptist Church, Grand and Washington Aves.
Tuesday, November 7, 1961 at 8:15 P. M.

William Ferguson came close to being a Texan. Just before his birth, his parents moved from Texas to Kansas, where his interest in nature began as he explored the wheat farms where he spent his boyhood.

Later he went to Chicago to study cartooning at the Academy of Fine Arts. He left school to draw a daily front page cartoon and a comic strip for a group of papers known as *The Corn Belt Farm Dailies* . . . a position which he still holds.

Wildlife, conservation, and nature lore are frequent topics in both the front page cartoon, and the comic strip, the latter, known as "The Beekins," being the only farm cartoon strip published daily.

In addition, William Ferguson originated *This Curious World*, an educational cartoon syndicated to hundreds of newspapers in the United States and Canada by the NEA Service.

Although his home is now in Omaha, Nebraska, summertime finds Bill Ferguson and his wife at their second home high in the Rockies at Estes Park, Colorado. Here he is a close neighbor to the wildlife of the foothills and snow-capped peaks.

Why do we have night and day? Seasons? Tides, prevailing winds, and ocean currents? William Ferguson has produced a striking motion picture film to dramatize the answers to these questions.

We swing through space aboard the spinning planet Earth to make a journey of six hundred million miles—*Once Around the Sun*.

Beginning at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, we move through plains and prairies, up mountains and down along coastlines, watch-

ing the gradual month by month change from long winter shadows to spring freshness, summer heat, autumn crispness, returning finally to the white cleanliness of winter. Mammals, birds, and plants appear on the screen in their accustomed roles, playing brief parts, and then bowing out to make room for the next act.

Once Around the Sun was filmed in a dozen states, and portrays our close association with the furred and feathered creatures that share our planet.

NOW COMES FEEDING TIME

The best way to build up the bird population in your yard is by providing food. So if you are not inclined to go out and watch the birds, you can coax the birds to come into your yard so that you do not have to travel far to see a large number of species that will come and visit with you. Every once and awhile you will see some rarities that will come to your feeding station that you might miss, even if you walked several miles. Sometimes the native food varies in abundance and the birds will come into your feeding station to make up for the deficiency. You will have some regular customers that you will get to know by sight, and you will be amused by their individual behavior. There are those that are quarrelsome, some are amiable, there is always a bully or two around, and if you will watch you will find that the bully will meet his just deserts someday when he meets another bully. So it makes a lively time in the yard with fun for all to watch. A feeding station within sight of a window is a continuous show with never a repeat performance. The attracting of the birds to your yard isn't all one sided. As they come into the feeding station they will make short excursions out into your yard and will drastically reduce the insect population that otherwise might be working on your flowers and vegetables. Feeding stations are particularly valuable to the birds during long periods of inclement weather. A word of caution before you start out with a feeding program. When you start your program, you have a certain responsibility that goes with it. If you provide food and water that is substantially in excess of what an area ordinarily would supply to the birds, they would find themselves in sore straits if it were suddenly removed. So if you start feeding the birds, see to it that you maintain the food in reasonable amounts. It is not desirable that you put out such large amounts of food that they come and feed entirely at your expense, but the food should be provided in a steady amount. You have attracted these friends to your dinner table and to leave them hungry would mean an unnecessary hardship for them, particularly if a spell of bad weather should set in.

A TOURIST'S EYE VIEW OF BIRDS! .

OR A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF A TOUR.

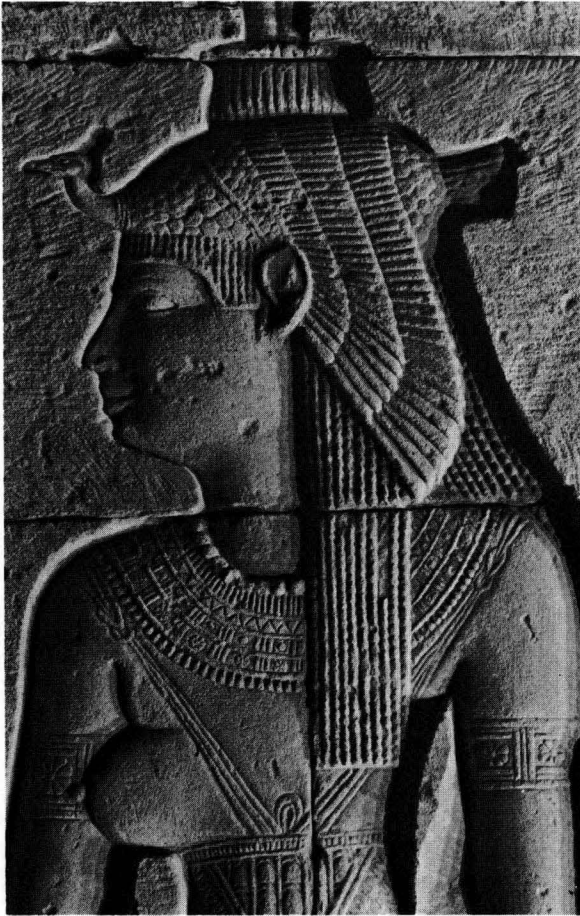
One of our Board members thinks he already has the high ranking bird list for 1961. The only trouble is he did not list them! And the reason was he could not identify many of them!! This would be unpardonable under most circumstances but we might forgive him in this case.

The Board member was Alex Hope, who with Mrs. Hope made a trip around the world from April into June. Many of the species they saw do not appear in Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds, which they carried, along with Baedeker's.

The Hopes had no trouble recognizing a stork in Germany and saw a considerable variety of terns on the Dutch Island of Marken and along the

Grecian Coast near Piraeus. Additions to their lists included the blackheaded gull and the Little Gull. A species slightly different from the sooty tern was also seen in large numbers on Marken.

An unintended bird sanctuary has apparently been created by the loving care given one of the Holy places adjoining Jerusalem. Priests and monks from an adjoining church keep green and verdant the Garden of Gethsemane and here several species were sighted whereas there was not a single bird noticeable on the barren hillsides round-about.



Ibis Headdress Adorns the Queen of a Pharaoh

The first unusual bird to attract their attention was the ibis in Egypt. This bird was revered by the ancient Egyptians perhaps more than we honor the eagle. Head-dress fashioned in its likeness was a symbol of royalty and worn only by members of the Pharaohs' household.

In Bombay they had a unique experience with vultures. A member of the Bombay Rotary Club took them to a large park which adjoins the "burial ground" of the Parsees, who are followers of Zoroaster, a religion prevalent in Persia until its overthrow by the Mohammedans in 7th Century A. D. The Zoroastrians do not believe in cremation like the Hindu nor do they think the body should be placed in the soil. They put the unclothed corpse on a high litter and permit the vultures to devour it. This was witnessed from a dis-

tance of perhaps 100 yards.

In the Himalaya area around Kathmandu in Nepal, most varieties of birds were not afraid of monkeys and some continued their preening while a monkey on the same branch chattered at an invading human. The monkeys there were shy but tame and at two different Buddhist monasteries would take cookies from one's hand after coaxing.

Small birds were occasionally seen perched on a bullock, but larger birds were scarce in inland India during these, the latter months of the hot, dry season. Since there is a complete lack of rainfall in India during this period, there was little to feed on then and many species had gone, either to the shore areas or to higher ground in the North where less heat and more

vegetation prevailed. Temperatures at Agra, Benares, Patna and Calcutta ranged from 103 to 114 degrees.

Birds were more numerous in the heavy growth along the klongs near Bangkok, where the Hopes viewed one of the most colorful of their sightings, the orange breasted Trogon. This identification was made for them by a Thailand guide. The Hopes found that most tourist guides knew little about species.

The largest number of gulls sighted on the trip were at Aberdeen, a fishing village in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong. Here thousands of people live on houseboats and provide scraps for the birds. Nearby a fleet of hundreds of fishing junks anchor. It was noticeable that flocks of gulls followed the inbound boats but not those outbound!

OCTOBER OUTING

The nicest thing that's happened to local Audubon people in a long time took place October 21 when Elizabeth Golterman, Elinor Hayward and Mildred Trotter entertained the Board members and their spouses at Mrs. Rombauer's country home near Antonia.

The afternoon was spent in the woods, with one hiking party shown in the adjoining photo. Foliage was at its autumn best and ripe persimmons were in abundance.



After a bountiful dinner the members spent the evening around the fire or just gazing at the Harvest moon—full.

Miss Golterman is still recovering from a painful accident she suffered a week before the party.



By J. EARL COMFORT

There was considerable birding activity during 1961 in the St. Louis Area, especially in the Spring months with Audubon sponsored April and May Forest Park and Shaw's Garden walks drawing record crowds if not record species.

In early winter the Glaucous Gull was the object of various searching projects by avid bird listers because Dick Anderson came up with two of these rare big birds at the Alton Dam on the very first day of the year after we were shut out by this species the previous year. Since his gulls were brownish first year birds there have been at least 3 of these wanderers from the North, a fully adult having been identified later in the same area by Wally George, Ruth Meyer, Wally Davis, Earl Comfort, Mitzi Anderson, Earl Hath, Mike Flieg and others.

The great hordes of Herring Gulls that invaded our area throughout January and early February were a direct result of the deep freeze farther north.

Bald Eagles also showed up in fair numbers on the frozen Mississippi and Illinois rivers where a plentiful supply of fish became available in the open air pot holes. The number of immatures was encouraging with our representation in life of our national emblem fighting a losing battle against decimation if not extinction.

There was more than the usual number of reports of wintering Brown Thrashers at local feeders when the deep snows of January forced these unusual winter visitants to seek human handouts.

The Haths were host and hostess to an Oregon Junco which showed up daily at their feeder during the period of snow-bound conditions.

Our only modern area record of a Snowy Owl was in the form of a specimen illegally shot. This extremely rare bird was mounted at the famous Schwarz Studio. It will be appropriately put on scientific display.

There is a definite birding advantage in living at the Shaw's Garden Arboretum, a privilege fully enjoyed by the Louis Brenners. Louis, of the Garden staff, an active birder, has been able to list more Red-breasted Nuthatches and Crossbills than any one else in the area because of this handy residence. His latest contribution to our composite list was a flock of some 20 to 25 Red Crossbills feeding on evergreen cones near the Brenner home on February 19th. This was an extraordinary listing considering this wandering species is generally seen only as a singleton on its rare local visitations.

There was an excellent warbler wave, particularly in Forest Park where such good listings as Cape May, Hooded, Black-throated Blue, Pine and Connecticut showed up. The Rarest was the Black-throated Blue.

When Ruth Meyer, Wally Davis and Earl Comfort checked the herony at Grand Marais State Park, East St. Louis, they found the nesting site (made famous by recent occupation by Common Egrets) was well represented by the egrets in company with many Black-crowned Night Herons. Evidently the egret is extending its nesting range northward.

The usual 4 Harris Teachers Ornithology class Spring field trips sponsored by the St. Louis Audubon Society gave us some good listings and

enjoyable hikes. Best find was a male Yellow-headed Blackbird. But this species was upped to 4 by Dr. Bulger, who found 3 males and a female in the Pacific, Mo. area.

The annual first Sunday in May bird roundup was well attended in spite of almost continuous thunder storm activity showers. A rare Purple Gannule made the list to the delight of its listers. Considering the weather handicap the total list of 149 species was an excellent tabulation.

Our annual Possum Trot nesting bird census on July 22nd gave us 45 species as well as relaxed social visiting with the genial Leonard Halls. The lateness of the season and our laziness were responsible for the small list.

Our Society again sponsored the school vacation nature sessions at Shaw's Garden with Eva Kirkpatrick, Helen Bowman and Lanier Criger assuming the leadership, many youngsters enrolling. These beneficiaries are indeed fortunate the opportunity is so conveniently afforded them. On the other hand, the Society and Shaw's Garden deserve special mention because of the importance of the project, as do the faithful leaders.

The first Fall bird field trip, led by Dick Anderson, was an interesting one, especially from a shorebird standpoint, 18 species being checked off. Best finds were Northern and Wilson's Phalaropes, Dowitcher, Upland Plover and Bairds and Western sandpipers. Yellow-crowned Night Herons added to the pleasure of the 14 participants.

We have resumed our third Saturday and last Sunday of the month Nature field trips at the Shaw's Garden Arboretum. These interesting walks are well worth attending.

After the initial Fall bird outing had ended the summer birding siesta, shorebirds stole the show climaxing over the Labor Day week end holiday with such envious listings as Knot and Buff-breasted Sandpiper by Dick Anderson and Jim Comfort at Little Creve Coeur Lake in St. Louis County. This flooded fields territory yielded a surprising total of 21 species on one week end. Some other good shorebird species there were Blackbellied Plover, Willet. White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper and Northern Phalarope. A Snowy Egret found nearby added to the listing excitement.

At their cabin overlooking the Mississippi near Pevely, Mo., Earl and Connie Hath enjoyed 3 Red-breasted Nuthatches attracted to their feeders on October first. They contributed the only Redbreasts and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher reported for the current year. There, on the following week end, we had a Blue-headed Vireo to add to our individual year lists.

The Fall warbler migration was disappointing with no good wave to pep us up.

On Oct. 9th Dick Anderson saw a rare Sanderling and a large flock of Red-backed Sandpipers at the Grand Marais State Park, East St. Louis. Both species were new for our composite list, giving us a total of 26 shorebirds for the year.

To date Peregrines (Duck Hawks) have been seen every month of the year, several interested persons chipping in with authentic reports. Their habitat are the downtown tall buildings.

INTERESTING BITS

St. Louis Audubon extends thanks to Mrs. Cecil Criger, Mrs. Eva Kirkpatrick, and Mrs. Helen Bowman for their fine work in putting on the nature course at Shaw's Garden. Mrs. Criger also volunteers as a Gray Lady at the State Hospital. Her work with garden clubs and with the Audubon Society has enabled her to be of immense help to the people she serves there.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Meet Boschertown School House
Highway 94, St. Charles County
December 23, 1961 . . . 8:00 A.M.
For details call YO. 5-8642 or FO. 7-1404

To reach Boschertown School House drive across the bridge at St. Charles, Missouri, follow Highway 94 north to Boschertown School House located on Highway 94 at Highway B on the left-hand side of the road.

DICK'S FRIEND FROM THE ROCKIES

Bluebell was often the name of a cat, but we have in our midst a Bluebell of the "cat" family who is a mountain lion. Bluebell was captured near Glen Haven, Colorado, when a 6 weeks old kitten last winter and was kept on display at a general store in Glen Haven during the summer tourist season. Now, however, Bluebell belongs to Dick Grossenheider who should be able to make the very best painting in existence of a young mountain lion. Dick has numerous other animals, some of which he is now using on TV shows. Perhaps you have noticed him Saturday mornings at 7:30.

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON BULLETIN

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The St. Louis Audubon Society
FOrest 7-1404

Earl H. Hath. President
Miss Alberta Bolinger. Executive Secretary

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LAST MINUTE NEWS ITEMS

30 Whooping Cranes Arrive at Aransas

A total of 30 whooping cranes were counted at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas on Sunday, October 29. This was the figure reported by the Department of the Interior. The total included 4 young birds and 26 adults. Seven adults and two immature birds arrived since Oct. 26. As this total indicates the whooping crane is one of our rarest birds and National Audubon Society has been a leader in demanding its protection.

Highlights of National Audubon Convention

The National Audubon Society's 57th Annual Convention held October 28-November 1 at Atlantic City is now history. One of the major addresses was delivered by James M. Quigley, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, who spoke Monday on "The Challenge of Environmental Pollution". He was followed Tuesday by U.S. Senator Harrison A. Williams, Jr., who reported on "The Federal Program for Open Space Preservation". Senator Williams was the leading Congressional sponsor of the Open Space legislation enacted this year. The Convention dinner on Monday, October 30, was featured by the noted TV personality John Charles Daly, now a member of the Federal Advisory Board on Water Pollution Control. His subject was "Clean Waters - A Challenge to America."

The Convention moved outdoors Sunday, October 29 when nationally known ornithologists and naturalists, including Allan Cruickshank, Alexander Sprunt, Jr., and Roger Peterson led field trips to Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge and Stone Harbor Heronry.

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